



**EASTWOOD
& PARTNERS**
INSURANCE BROKERS

Health & Safety Bulletin

Volume 4 Issue 3

March 2010

Working with Lead

The HSE have revised their advise regarding working with lead.

If the level of lead in the body gets too high, it can cause headaches, tiredness and stomach cramps.

Continued uncontrolled exposure can cause infertility, damage to the kidneys, brain or nerves, etc.

Lead exposure is obviously a risk when dealing with lead in smelting, refining and casting operations but is also found in construction, burning of old lead paint, demolition, etc.

Lead can enter the body through breathing in lead vapour or ingesting lead dust or fumes.

For the latest free HSE advice please visit:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg305.pdf.

Eastwood and Partners Limited Insurance Brokers Working at Height Regulations 5 Years On



It is coming up to 5 years since the Work at Height Regulations 2005 came into force.

The regulations made it a requirement for employers to provide suitable equipment to work at height along with edge protection or anti fall measures to protect workers.

So, 5 years on have they made any difference?

Well, I am sure that we have all driven past buildings and witnessed men working on roofs, etc with nothing between them and the floor. Usually however this is the small or one man

business. It does seem that generally construction firms are now complying with the requirements.

The HSE are keen to ensure that all work at height is done safely as the result of an accident is usually severe, with death often the case.

However, we would like to point out that work at height is not just undertaken by construction firms but by most firms in one form or another. How do you change the factory light bulbs or clean the guttering? Do you have employee's

working on the back of wagons? Do you work next to a ditch, excavation or loading bay?

Work at height is classed as ALL WORK undertaken ABOVE GROUND LEVEL or next to a fall hazard and the regulations do not specify a certain height.

So what should you do?

Contrary to popular myth the HSE have not banned the use of ladders but the employer should assess whether these provide the best form of access or work platform. Scissor lifts for instance may be a safer option.

Remember, the costs involved in a serious accident will far out way the cost of providing the best equipment.

IOSH Goes to War Over Grit

The Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) has recently been involved in a heated and protracted battle with the media over reports that it advised employers not to grit during the recent bad weather for fear of litigation being made against the employer.

It appears that an article written by a third party has wrongly been attributed to IOSH which has led to certain areas of the media rounding on the Institute.

IOSH are keen to point out that they have never advised employers not to grit.

We at E&P appreciate that with the recent bad weather this is an area which has obviously been highlighted but it does appear to us to be nothing more than a snowstorm in a teacup.

Gang Warfare: Health and Safety's Fault Apparently.

One of our esteemed Members of Parliament, the Right Honourable Julian Brazier MP, has recently announced that the growing number of young people involved in gangs is partly as a result of a claims culture limiting opportunities for them to take part in adventure training and sport.

Whilst health and safety is often blamed for many things we find the assumption that just because you can't abseil down a cliff face anytime you want to, then the only alternative is to join a gang a little hard to swallow.

But perhaps that's just us.



Training

Health and Safety legislation places a duty on the employer to ensure that staff have adequate training in order to carry out their duties.

Here at Eastwood and Partners we are able to offer Chartered Institute of Environmental Health courses in Manual Handling awareness, Risk Assessment Level 2 and 3 as well as Workplace Health Safety and Welfare level 1, 2 and 3.

Bespoke courses can also be prepared to your individual needs. All courses can be delivered in house or at our own training facilities.

All our trainers are certified CIEH Professional Trainers. Please contact Kevin or Mario for details on 01484 820000.

HSE NOTICES

HSE Notice

The Notification of Conventional Tower Cranes Regulations 2010 (the 'Regulations') come into force on 6 April 2010.

The Regulations require certain information about conventional tower cranes used on construction sites to be notified to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

This leaflet sets out:

- The types of tower crane that need to be notified to HSE;
- Who needs to ensure notification is made;
- When the notification needs to be made;
- What information needs to be notified; and
- How the information should be notified.

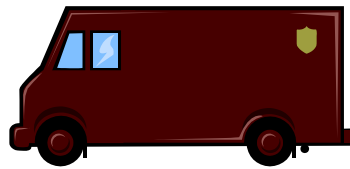
The leaflet is a free download from HSE Publications

The Health and Safety Executive's new load safety campaign is focused on reducing the number of death and injuries linked to workplace transport

Loading and unloading accounts for one in five workplace transport incidents- many resulting from loads not being properly restrained

Unsafe loads on vehicles injure more than 1,200 people a year and cost UK businesses millions of pounds in damaged goods.

Drivers/businesses who are found to have unsafe loads face fines or even risk having their vehicle ordered off the road.



Recent cases

Worker falls to his death

A Bolton house-building company has today been fined £7,500 after one of its workers fell to his death.

The company was prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after their employee, aged 64, was killed when he fell from an unstable ladder.

Manchester Crown Court heard that the employee was working on a project to build six new semi-detached houses in Bolton, on 19 December 2007 when he fell five metres to the ground

HSE's investigation found that the employer had allowed work to be carried out on the first and second floors of the house, before the stairs had been fitted. The ladder, which was used to reach the second floor, had not been secured and was missing its rubber feet.

The company, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 by failing to ensure the safety of their employee. The company was ordered to pay an additional £7,500 towards the cost of the prosecution as well as the fine.

The HSE Inspector prosecuting said "This was a tragic incident that could easily have been prevented if the company had put more thought into the safety of its employees.

"The ladder being used was dangerous as the rubber feet were missing and it wasn't tied to the wall to stop it slipping.

"But more importantly, the employee should never have been expected to use a ladder in the first place. If the work had been planned properly, the stairs would have been fitted before work was carried out on the first and second floors of the house.

Workers Put at risk

A Bristol-based company has been fined for putting its workers at risk of asbestos-related diseases while working on a property in the city.

The Company pleaded guilty at Bristol Magistrates in relation to refurbishment work at Lawrence Hill Industrial Park in the city during February and March 2009.

The court heard Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors visited industrial units where the defendant had organised refurbishment work involving the removal of a large quantity of asbestos insulation board without taking statutory

safety precautions.

This led to exposure of the workers to the asbestos and also the contamination of the units being renovated.

The court heard the company plead guilty to breaches under Regulation 14 of the Construction (Design and Management) [CDM] Regulations 2007 by failing to appoint a CDM-coordinator or principal contractor for notifiable construction work and Regulation 4 (10) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations by failing to review or implement a plan to manage materials containing asbestos. The company was fined £18,000 and ordered to pay £6,679 costs

News

Environmental News

From February 1st 2010, retailers now have to bear the full responsibility for the recycling of batteries

In order to help meet this goal shops are expected to collect used batteries and while businesses recognise their responsibilities, the British Retail Consortium (BRC) said in-store collection facilities may not be enough to help the government meet its target.

SIMPLE MISTAKES CAN SHATTER LIVES

The HSE Shattered lives web site is well worth a visit

There are three tools worth using

STEP E-Learning package

WAIT the work at height access information assessment tool

SAT tool, which is useful in assessing the surface of walkway area

There are also a number of useful links and advice which can help in controlling slips and trips in the workplace

HSE MYTH OF THE MONTH:

Myth: There's nothing you can do about slips and trips and they don't really hurt anyone anyway



Most slips and trips are preventable and many happen when spills aren't cleared up or clutter tidied away. Last year, there were four fatalities and more than 10 000 employees were seriously injured when they had a slip or trip at work. This results in broken bones and time off work, costing the economy around £800 million per year. Simple mistakes can shatter lives ... your actions could help stop them from happening.

Don't take things for granted, cut corners or wait for someone else to do it. Clear up!